

HELMUTH, (W.T.)

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# PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

BEFORE

THE HOMŒOPATHIC MEDICAL SOCIETY OF THE STATE OF  
NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 12TH, 1889.

## SECTARIANISM IN MEDICINE

BY

WILLIAM TOD HELMUTH, M.D., LL.D.,

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REPRINTED FROM THE NORTH AMERICAN JOURNAL OF HOMŒOPATHY, AND  
PUBLISHED BY ORDER OF THE SOCIETY.

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MARCH, 1889.



## SECTARIANISM IN MEDICINE.

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I AM a sectarian in religion ; by creed a Protestant, and yet I hope a Christian.

I am a sectarian in politics ; by creed a Republican, and yet I hope an American citizen.

I am a sectarian in medicine ; by creed a Homœopath, and yet I hope a physician.

In religion my peculiar belief in points of doctrine and other theological minutiae does not debar me from all the rights of christianity.

The direction of my suffrage does not prevent me from availing myself of all the privileges accorded by the Constitution to a citizen of the United States.

The manner in which I prescribe my medicines for the sick, confided to my care, does not or cannot eject me beyond the pale of the medical profession, with all that thereunto belongs.

These avowals are made without any idea of advancing personal beliefs ; they are intended to be purely illustrative of conditions which surround every thinking man in the community, and because in medicine alone can be found the thaumaturgical illustration of a fanaticism which would disown a brother, *because he is sectarian*.

Sectarianism, ladies and gentlemen, is the offspring of originality, and in many cases the guardian of progress. It has cast down the idols of Paganism; it has overthrown a beautiful but heathen myth-

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\* Presidential Address delivered at the annual meeting of the Homœopathic Medical Society of the State of New York, Feb. 12th, 1889.



ology, and sent the sun of Christianity to brighten and redeem the world. It has made this country, in all its magnificence, what it represents to-day before the nations of the earth, and it has already begun a revolution in the medicine of the nineteenth century which is palpable to every one who can discern the signs of the times, and of which the end is not yet.

We must, however, discriminate between sectarianism and fanaticism ; for, in the latter, tyranny always forms an important element, and tyranny brooks no opposition and renders argument a torment ; it commands all men to bow down before its idols and would crucify every dissenting spirit.

But you are told to-day, that because the homœopathists are "*sectarian*" they can have no fellowship with the so-called regular practising physicians of this country.

Dr. Austin Flint, a man in authority, plainly says : "If the homœopathic practitioners abandon their organization and the name, provided they have received a regular medical education, there need be no restrictions in consultation, other than those belonging to other portions of the code." (*N. Y. Medical Journal*, April 7th, 1883.) Similar conditions of renunciation were demanded of the early Christians before they were cast into the arena to fight with the beasts at Ephesus. Such revocation of belief Tertullus, in his oration before Festus, would have exacted from Paul, when he was accused of belonging to the hated *sect* of the Nazarenes, and is exactly what England demanded of our colonies, when they decided to abide by the newly-formed Constitution of the United States.

It is not necessary here to refer to those early centuries when, in "Antioch the Beautiful," the name "Christian" was given to the followers of Christ, or to those troublous times later in the world's great history, when Luther defied the supremacy of the Pope by burning the papal bull before the gates of Wittemberg : nor yet again still later, when this country declared itself a free and independent nation—asserting, in the words of the great Jefferson, that "all government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed."

These are all established historical facts in the professions of theology and law. But in the profession of medicine there remains yet to be recorded the manner and the forces which combined to render the homœopaths *sectarian*—this being the great obstacle now urged against the followers of Hahnemann. To do this satisfactorily the fact must be acknowledged that at present there exists an old and a new school of medicine. The former is august, ancient and honorable, having enrolled within its archives the names of some of the

noblest and most earnest men of the times in which they lived; single-eyed and humane, walking with rectitude in the paths they believed to be true; clinging with tenacity to their traditional notions; watching with suspicious eyes the advance of any new doctrine tending to conflict with the established precepts of their school, and resenting with animosity any breakage of its written or unwritten laws. On the other hand there is a NEW SCHOOL of medicine, of which we claim to be members, and of which this Society is one of the exponents— young and energetic, that, instead of resting its practice on the traditional medicine of experience, has a scientific law to guide its therapeutics; that has been bold enough to face a storm of persecution and abuse—which, indeed, was to have been expected from its ancient and vindictive mother; and now, as our colonists of old believed in a new Constitution and declared themselves independent, fought for the principles they professed, and have acquired a recognized position among the nations of the earth; so this new school, now passing through its ordeal of trial and persecution, has acquired a status as a system of medicine which cannot be overthrown; sectarian, if you will, but honestly and honorably sectarian in every particular. Do not understand me to imply, by these words, that the homœopathic school is perfect, or that those who believe and practice according to the formula *similia similibus curantur* are by any means superior, as a class, to those who deny its verity. There exists to-day, as much bigotry and intolerance in the one school as in the other (considering the difference in age and the comparative numbers of each). There is as much jealousy and rivalry; there are proportionately as many good and bad men in the one school as in the other, simply because we are all of the stock of Adam—*human*. The difference between the schools lies here: The new school professes to follow, *whenever it is practicable*, a method of cure based upon a certain law which we claim renders its practice scientific; the old school, follows the experience of its great men, which necessarily produces a practice often successful but nevertheless variable and uncertain, for the deductions from experience differ in different minds.

It is on this account—I mean the belief in the formula of similars—that we are termed “sectarian” by the majority of physicians, who appear to forget the process by which this sectarianism, if it be such, was created, and which has now grown to such gigantic proportions that it can never be overthrown; it stands forever on the rock of truth.

Let me review a few historical truths, and you will pardon me if in doing this I draw from my own experience, giving *facts* which no



man dare gainsay, for, after all, the time has come for the production of the truth ; truth that cannot be denied, or, if denied, can readily be proven.

Thirty-five years ago the homœopathic system of medicine was considered, both by the old school and by the majority of the people, as the most rampant system of quackery and humbug in existence. A perusal of the allopathic literature of that period will amply verify the assertion. If any enterprising medical gentleman would overrun the "back numbers" of the leading medical journals of this country and of Europe of the period of which I speak, and collate the articles—contributed and editorial—which stamped in the most offensive manner everything pertaining to homœopathy, a book could be compiled that would astound the rising generation of doctors of both schools ; it would be composed of dire anathemas against the system ; predictions of its immediate dissolution (forecasts of a similar character are occasionally made even now) ; libellous attacks upon Hahnemann and upon those who believed in his doctrine ; arithmetical calculations to show that it would require a billion of worlds like ours to make a thirtieth potency—in bulk ; outrageous mis-statements regarding the dosage question ; flaming reports of medical societies wherein were chronicled the expulsions of those members who believed in homœopathy ; of actual murder attributed to members of the new school, and a host of side slurs and sneers which would render such a book interesting and humorous to us, but I am sure would be absolutely humiliating to many of the most prominent and right-minded men of the old school. In the year 1850 I began to copy from the pages of one medical journal alone—and that one the most prominent in the world at that time—the most vituperative of these articles ; I felt sure they would be of use to me if I lived. I was but a boy then, and long has the book been closed. Most of the authors who penned these rhetorical persiflages are no more (God rest their souls), but their words are still in existence ; I bring them forward at this juncture to make a first link in the chain of facts to show *why we are and who made us sectarian*. I can only introduce a few expressions from some of these articles, as time and space forbid any extensive notice. For instance, in the *London Lancet*, July, 1851, is an article entitled "*Homœopathic Wrath*," in which an abominable story is told of "a globulist" who sold his principles for money. In the same journal, September, 1850, the editorial reads, "We are told that the *homœopathic quackery* is advancing in Spain, that the inroads of "*the homœopathic tribe*" are great. In the January number, 1851, is an article headed "*Quackery Rampant*," in which appears the following: "The



last monstrosity, *homœopathy*, the most absurd of all, has acquired an importance, temporary as it must be for many reasons, one of the many, we regret to say, which has originated in certain *dishonest members of our own profession*. These men (*homœopathists*), unable from their *shallow capacities* and acquirements to fight *fairly* and to compete manfully with their brethren, have shrunk, as it were, behind the hedge and *turned assassins to obtain a livelihood*. Yet, not content with practising a *quackery*, the *absurdity of which has no parallel in history*, these *renegades* lose no opportunity in placing their daggers in the reputation of legitimate medicine. . . . But the *delusion* will fail, as all such *delusions* must; another *form of quackery* will rise, and a *globulist*, if in a few years such can be found, may be exhibited, as was the *metallic tracter*, as a *curiosity*."

In the same journal for January, 1851, is a communication on the London Homœopathic Hospital by one Thomas Ballard. It begins, "Sir : Observing that you invite the contribution of facts respecting *the huge system of imposture called homœopathy*," and after a lot of nonsense, ends as follows : "In case of death occurring in this institution would it not be proper that the *Coroner should inquire* whether all due means have been employed to prolong life ; and if found to be otherwise, would not someone *be guilty of manslaughter, or at the least of passive murder ?*" What an outrageous inuendo is here expressed.

In the same journal, November, 1850, can be found a long and vituperative article, headed *Frauds of Homœopathy*, in which we are called "*Craven Knaves*," "*Medical renegades who prostitute the title of M.D.*," "The disciples of Hahnemann, the father of homœopathic lies," who is called our "*mendacious master Hahnemann*," and abounding in such epithets as these "*the lies of homœopathy*," "*huge system of imposture*," "*the odious system of quackery*," etc., etc.

In the same journal, July, 1851, homœopathy, after being called "*Quackery*," and its upholders dubbed "*the semi-insane followers of Hahnemann*," is explained. The "*disgusting and loathesome features of globulism*" are pointed out, as well as its "*fraud and humbug*."

In the same number of the same journal, July, 1851, is an editorial headed "The Edinburgh College of Physicians." It may be well here to remark that it was about this time that Professor Henderson, holding then the Chair of Pathology in the University of Edinburgh, espoused homœopathy, and the medical press of the country was aroused to such a pitch of frenzy that no words could be too opprobrious ; no language too vile ; no insinuations too base ; no imputations too severe for those who believed in, or even had a ten-

dency toward homœopathy. It was, indeed, laughable to see how anger obscured the otherwise good judgment of the editorial chair. It was considered impossible that a man should continue to teach pathology, as he had most successfully for twenty-five years, after he had changed his ideas of therapeutics. The celebrated Professor Simpson then published his book entitled, "Homœopathy; its Tenets and Tendencies, Theoretical, Theological and Therapeutical" (*decidedly T. T.*), which brought forth Henderson's masterly reply, which passed through a couple of editions in as many months. Then the Edinburgh College fulminated its wrath against homœopathy; and the *Lancet*, in an editorial, ran a-muck with depreciatory and defamatory adjectives, and slanged with all its might and main everything and everybody homœopathic. Such sentences as these occur: "It is, we believe, well understood to be the purpose of the northern college to proceed against all such persons as may show themselves *slow to understand what honor and truth require of them.* . . . They will be *plainly and forcibly ejected.* Nor will those be spared who, in weak compliance with aristocratic caprice, and in order to *steal a march upon their more sturdy and honest competitors,* so far forget what is due to their *education, their position and their duty to their patients* as to countenance and meet in consultation *that pseudo medical tribe* who, under the *gabardine of homœopathy,* wait upon the weakness and stoop to the humors of the pampered men and women of the upper ranks of society. . . . We have in this metropolis (London), to a still greater extent than in Edinburgh, our *impostors,* and we regret to say our false brothers, who do us more injury than the *quacks.* Were the homœopaths invariably left in the difficulties into which their presumption and their *dishonesty* frequently lead them, their credit with the public would long ago have been destroyed. But when physicians of *hitherto good name* consent to meet such men, and thus vouch for the propriety of their proceedings, they are vastly aided in their scandalous and nefarious trade. . . . The monstrous alliance now proceeding between regulars and quacks might surely deserve the exertion of collegiate authority. What is to be done with Dr. Henderson, the homœopathic professor of pathology in the University of Edinburgh, to the *condign disgrace of the University and every other professor, be it spoken?*" "What sort of pathology does this man teach? etc., etc., etc." It is needless to carry these quotations further, or to allude to many similar occurrences in this country. I could tell of so-called "homœopathic homicides;" of the attempted wholesale expulsion of at least sixty members from one society at one time, the offending cause being nothing but a differ-



ence in therapeutic belief. I could tell even of students refusing to hear an old, eloquent and learned divine deliver a valedictory address at a public commencement, because he was known to be favorable to "the schism."

I well recollect that my preceptor, Dr. Wm. S. Helmuth, holding the Chair of Theory and Practice of Medicine in the Homœopathic Medical College of Pennsylvania, a man of high honor and a modest, though constant, student, a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania in 1822-1823, had been convinced by practical experiments upon himself of the truth of the homœopathic law, and had adopted it in his practice. Many of his friends were professors in the Medical Colleges of Philadelphia; and I remember the feelings of pain with which he would relate, day after day, the outrageous discourtesies to which he was subjected. His early associates, men he had known for years, avoided him, and he was tabooed both social and professional intercourse. I well remember that in those days there were monthly professional social gatherings, called "Wistar parties," originated by Caspar Wistar, the celebrated anatomist (and I believe they are continued to this day), which were held in high repute by the profession. The cards of invitation (I can see them now) were peculiar in their engraving. These, which I used to see frequently upon his table, stopped as if by magic, when it became known that he had become a homœopathist. In other words, he was cast out as a renegade and a miscreant.

Professional and social ostracism by the old school was the lot of every homœopathist, and from the more rabid the most odious epithets and insinuations were unsparingly applied. This animosity was carried to such an extent—in Philadelphia, at least—that the oldest and best ties of friendship were severed; and as lately in England a respectable and honest old school practitioner was turned upon by nine "regulars," and placed under the ban of excommunication, because he had dared to prescribe, according to the principles of his own school, in an institution to which were attached homœopathic practitioners, so in this country whole families were parted because a relation saw fit to call upon or was interested in a homœopathic practitioner. No homœopathist, avowed or even suspected, was allowed a place in the medical societies to which (bear in mind) *he belonged*. No homœopathist was permitted to darken the doors of a hospital; no homœopathic communication on any subject was allowed to appear in a medical journal. Nay, students, wishing to study according to the old school tenets, could not matriculate if the preceptor was *suspected* of being even tinged with the heresy.

The introductory lectures in the medical colleges in Philadelphia, where I lived at that time, sneered at us ; the students jeered at us ; not only thus, but were actually ashamed of being seen in company with us by any old-school doctor. They were the physicians, we the charlatans ; they the regulars, we the irregulars ; they the doctors, we the quacks ; they the wise men, and we the fools ; they the honest men, and we the knaves. I am putting this strongly, but I am telling what I know, and am telling it for a purpose. Those gentlemen who are ten years my seniors in the profession, could tell you more. A wound may heal, forgiveness may be perfect, as it is, so far as I am concerned, but the cicatrix is there ; it stays till death, it cannot be forgotten, and will contract in bad weather.

Under these circumstances, what were the homœopathists to do ? Were they, believing honestly in what they professed, to bow down before the majority and actually become the knaves, or the frauds their enemies represented them ? Were they, believing one thing, to be dishonest enough to practice another, or were they forced, actually driven, pushed to the extremity by the cry of "no quarter," extermination and disgrace, to join themselves together—to do as did the early Christians of the catacombs, become a sect. *And so they did*, and so, through no fault of their own, do they remain to this day.

Driven then by this relentless persecution, was it wonderful that a disposition to retaliation and a complete revulsion of feeling was developed among the earlier homœopathists ? was it a wonder that these old-school men—and they were all old-school men—graduated from the best colleges in America and in Europe, who had been driven to the wall because they had the courage of their convictions, when they found all colleges, hospitals, societies, journals, all the avenues of medical knowledge and medical experience, save, perhaps, individual reading, closed against them ; when they discovered that men of less education and poorer qualifications sneered at them ; when they, grown gray in the profession, and who had held responsible positions in the community, were snubbed by strip-lings, the ink on whose diplomas was scarcely dry, and the discourtesy approved by the mass of the majority, that these men fought, and fought hard—for they were no cowards—for the principles they professed ? Was it wonderful, I say, that they gave too wide a range to the formula, believed too implicitly in the curability of all diseases, and were tempted to allow symptomatology to absorb all the other collateral branches of medicine—to abjure all that was good as well as bad in the old school, and, knowing from their own experience the uncertainty and changeability of its therapeutics, to cast it



out as a blot upon the escutcheon of medicine and have done with it forever? At the times of which I speak I have heard an educated homœopathic physician—a man of high honor and sensitive in the extreme—who had been stung to the quick by the social and professional scorn of his brethren, state that he considered it an actual disgrace to have in his library any allopathic literature whatever. And so, on both sides the breach between the schools widened, and so the homœopathists in the United States became *sectarian*.

How this was accomplished in this State is well told by Dr. D. B. St. John Roosa in the anniversary discourse delivered before the New York Academy of Medicine last November. Speaking of the high position occupied by medicine before the tirade against homœopathy began, he says : “ But not content with its high position as recognized by the political power of the commonwealth, the medical profession undertook to repress opinion on practice as to the treatment of diseases. The heresy was not as to the ascertained facts in anatomy and physiology, it was not a question as to how the human body was constituted, as to what was the structure of the heart or liver, but as to what drugs were to be given in cases of ascertained disease, and as to what was the principle upon which they acted—heresy, in short, on subjects, however it may have been fifty years ago, *in which there is no orthodoxy now*. These new heretics were not like the Thomsonsians, uneducated men, but trained in the same schools as other members of the profession in good and regular standing in the county societies and under the protection of the law. In 1842, in the pasturages of Orange County, the fight waxed so warm that the county society forbade a homœopathic physician from practising within its jurisdiction. *This fatal step caused the persecuted sect* to appeal to the Legislature, which not only deprived the county societies from preventing those to whom they objected from practising, but also allowed anybody to practice who chose to call himself a physician.”

And so in this Commonwealth we became the new-school sect, in opposition to the old-school sect, and so we remain to this day. But as time passed, as the predictions (some of which I have already noted) of our downfall and decay were unrealized; as knowledge infused dignity into the new school; when epidemics of severe character tested the truth of the doctrine of Hahnemann; when the people began to observe the results of the practice; when colleges were organized and hospitals erected; periodicals issued and books published; when various legislative bodies granted charters to educational and charitable enterprises, the advanced men of the old school began to look more dispassionately into the workings of the “sec-

tarians," and the new school acknowledged the greatness and the majesty of medicine, as a whole, and that a mere knowledge of therapeutics did not constitute the entire qualifications of the practitioner.

But it was a difficult matter immediately after the heat of controversy for either side to make any advancement toward unity. It was surely the position of those who had been so vilely treated to await patiently some sort of acknowledgement of the grievous wrongs that had been done; and now it has come, only in its beginning, to be sure, slowly and imperceptibly, but certainly, nevertheless.

The arrogant assumption, the bitter invective, the bigoted intolerance, the persistent ridicule which soiled the pages of magazines that chronicled, under the same covers, the work of great men in every department of medicine, have died away; a few embers of the persecuting fire occasionally flash into an evanescent flame, but no harm is done. The old school no longer sets itself up as a mystical medical cultus, to deviate from the laws of which is death or banishment, for it has discovered that at present, at least, no orthodoxy exists in medicine; at this moment it is suffering from mental indigestion. The good old dose of medical ethics, once supposed so useful in purifying and preserving from contamination the body politic, has proved a source of continued irritation to its advanced and educated medical stomach, and symptoms both novel and strange are in a continued state of development, which indicate to the careful prognosticator, who has silently watched the evolutions which have been taking place in the medical body, that some of the old acrid and nauseating components of the ethical pill must be omitted, or that old physic will die, leaving behind two sons—*Old Code*, who was acquainted with Hippocrates, and who moves encumbered still with a coat of antiquated mail; and *New Code*, who is acquainted with Hahnemann, and who sincerely laments the injudicious persecutions showered by his elder brother upon the homœopaths.

The aspect of the times bears witness to these facts. The former so-called quackery has been raised in the estimation of a *certain portion* of the old school to a respectable position, and is acknowledged as *one* of the means by which disease may be cured. Hahnemann himself, even in the eyes of those who materially differ from his views, is ranked as one of the reformers in medicine.

Last June, Sir Wm. Stokes, in delivering the Cavendish lecture, "On the Altered Relations of Surgery to Medicine," used the following significant language in reference to the varied methods of curing disease: "I allude more particularly to the foundation and



advocacy of varied systems which prevailed at different eras, as for example, the dogmatists, eclectic, the methodists, astrologists and alchemists." Mark, if you please, in this company homœopathy is not named. At the period to which I have alluded in the early part of this address the followers of Hahnemann were classed with the astrologists and soothsayers of old. "And," continues Sir William, "in later times to *the schools* of Cullen, Brown, Broussais and Hahnemann." Surely this places the founder of homœopathy in a position and in a company to be respected. He is "quack" no more; he is the founder of a school of medicine.

Dr. St. John Roosa, in his address last November, says: "Shall we say that a medical man is unfit for professional association because he brings himself to believe that scarlatina can be checked by infinitesimal doses of belladonna, or that quinine or antipyrine will cut off typhoid fever, or that electricity will cure cataract, or sulphide of calcium will abort inflammation, any one of which opinions is resolutely held by well educated and experienced men and as firmly denied by others. *It is impossible to deal seriously with those who would drive out men from a learned profession, not because their attainments are insufficient, or their moral character defective, but because they are believed to hold erroneous notions in the Materia Medica and in Therapeutics.*" Could more liberal, upright or manly statements than these, made as they are by one of the most illustrious men in this State, be brought to convince us of the altered position of at least a portion of the old school?

Dr. Kenneth Millican, a distinguished old-school surgeon, whose stubborn refusal to be boycotted by his colleagues, gave rise to the now celebrated *odium medicum* controversy, thus writes: "When first the doctrine, or rather the therapeutic rule, 'let likes be cured by likes,' was enunciated by Hahnemann, it was received by the medical profession at large with derision and scouted as an axiomatic absurdity. . . . But now all that is changed. We, of the *regular* profession, admit that there are individual cases where a drug which, in the healthy body, in large doses will produce certain symptoms, will in small doses cure similar symptoms arising from the disease. . . . The difference becomes no longer one of the first principles, no longer one of kind, but one of degree, consequently there is no predetermined impossibility of an honest agreement in consultation as to the drug indicated in a given case."

Regarding this very same controversy, the London *Times* (January 20th, 1888), whose columns had been always closed to the homœopaths, after publishing the extensive correspondence of both parties, in a final editorial, which I wish I could read to you entire, says:

"We pointed out that it is a mistake to fling charges of knavery and folly, either alternatively or cumulatively, at men taught by the same teachers, trained at the same schools, and declared qualified practitioners of medicine by the same authorities as themselves. To call a man a fool, who holds exactly the same diploma as the men who abuse him, merely because he differs upon some medical subtlety which laymen are told they cannot form any opinion about, has the effect of filling the lay mind with distrust of the very certificates upon the strength of which the doctors challenge our confidence." It would be hardly fair to occupy your attention with more quotations to prove how time has changed the sentiments of many *individual gentlemen* of the old school and completely altered public opinion.

To complete these proofs, however, I must for a moment call attention to one most important fact, and that is, the recommendation of drugs homœopathic to disease in homœopathic doses, to be found in the advanced old-school text-books.

Lauder Brunton, Bartholow, Phillips, Jacobi and others make no hesitation in recommending such medicines in minute doses for certain diseases. To my mind it is of *the smallest possible import*, whether these gentlemen of the allopathic sect make acknowledgment of the sources from which they derive the knowledge of the drugs they so confidently recommend. *They* know where they got it. *We* know where they got it. It was dug from the homœopathic materia medica, "on the sly" (if I may be pardoned the expression), and the homœopathy they teach is perceptible at the first reading, explain it as they may. Let such authors appropriate for the present all they desire; we can afford it. Let them prescribe merc., cor. and colocynth for dysentery; ipecac for vomiting; pulsatilla for orchitis; nuxvomica for dyspepsia; arnica for bruises; sulphide of calcium for abscess, aconite for pneumonia and bi-chloride of mercury for diphtheria.

Still more: let them have these medicines prepared in attenuated doses called "*parvules*," or triturated and moulded into tablets called "*tritirates*," or done up in what are known as "*dosimetric granules*," packed in diminutive vials, arranged side by side in morocco cases, each bottle resembling each other in size, color, form and contents, to be carried in the old-school pocket, dispensed at the bedside by old school doctors, for the welfare of the old school patient. It is an improvement over the saddle bag and big bottle treatment of a past generation. It is really not only homœopathic therapeutics, but homœopathic posology as well. It extends the belief in homœopathy and the patients thank God for the change.

While these remarkable transformations have been taking place in the old school, it would be unfair to its members and to ourselves to omit mention of the singular mutations which have occurred among the homœopaths. There exists at present at least two distinct sects in the school. There are those who, while they believe implicitly in the formula *similia similibus curantur*, as covering the widest field in therapeutics, are of opinion that it cannot always be applied, first, because the materia medica is imperfect; and, second, because our knowledge of it is often insufficient; who believe that there are methods of curing disease other than the homœopathic; who consider it necessary for the physician to understand as perfectly as the short span of his life will permit the varied collateral branches of medical science; who believe the dose to be a secondary consideration and not an essential; who, while they revere Hahnemann as a scientist and a scholar and as the founder of a distinct school of medicine, do not coincide with many of his ideas; who regard the welfare of the sick and the alleviation of suffering above mere adherence to a principle, and hesitate not if they are unable to find the similitum to prescribe what best they can obtain from the experience of any other school.

There is another sect, the Hahnemann Homœopaths, who believe in the universality of the homœopathic law, and in its never-failing application; who are of opinion that it is the only law to be followed in the treatment of disease, and that all other methods must be abjured; that palliation, other than on the principle of similars, is wrong and prejudicial to the patient; who regard the question of dose as an integral part of homœopathy; who believe in the development of the medicinal or curative virtues of a drug, by trituration or succussion up to the highest possible potencies; who look with disfavor upon the alternation of remedies; and some of whom, I think not all, regard the single dose of a remedy prescribed for the totality of the symptoms sufficient to cure the ailment for which it is prescribed.

It will be seen from the above that I have endeavored, as dispassionately as I am able, to describe the general beliefs of the parties as a whole, and that that of the Hahnemann Homœopaths is vested in the master Hahnemann and all of his teachings, while that of the homœopath is vested in the formula which Hahnemann discovered. It is to the teaching and practice of the latter class that the changed attitude of the old school toward the new is chiefly to be ascribed.

Both of these sects are, no doubt, honest in their convictions, and we are bound, as fellow members of this society, to respect each other's convictions; but, after all, when we come to look minutely



into the matter, the difference between us (I belong to the *former* sect) is more in degree than in kind, save in regard to the question of dosage. The fundamental principle at the bottom is the law of similars, the one party, however, giving it a wider scope than the former. One declares that it embraces the entire field of therapeutics, while the other contends that at the present time it can only be applied to a portion thereof. So far as the principle of dosage is concerned, I am of opinion that there is no law regarding it. The question of posology must forever remain a matter of experience, judgment and skill.

There are no two temperaments exactly alike; there are no two constitutions exactly alike. One man can take a refreshing exercise which would disable another. Some articles of food are prejudicial to one person and beneficial to another, and therefore I rest content with the words of Hahnemann, and let us take them to heart. He says, on page 79 of his *Organon*: "The first and *sole* duty of the physician is to restore health to the sick. This is the true art of healing"; and on page 203, "The question that now suggests itself is to discover what may be the degree of minuteness of the dose best calculated to render the salutary effects intended to be produced certain and gentle, that is, to say how far the dose of a homœopathic remedy in any given case of disease ought to be reduced in order to derive from it the best possible cure." His next words are important. "It may be readily conceived that no *theoretical conjecture* will furnish an answer to this problem, and that it is *not by such means we can establish, in respect to each individual medicine, the quantity of the dose that suffices to produce the homœopathic effect and accomplish a prompt and gentle cure. No reasonings, however ingenious, will avail in this instance. It is by pure experiments, only, and precise observations that this object can be attained.*" . . .

Let us, therefore, have recorded for present instruction and future reference the name of the drug that cures. That is sufficient for me, and if the posological mention is distasteful to either party, let the potency be left out altogether. It is homœopathy and not posology that this society advocates, and as in the latter every man must act from his own experiments, pray allow him so to do. Let us remember, as old Epictetus says: Every matter has two handles by which it can be grasped. The homœopathist seizes one handle of the posological balloon with a grasp of iron and strives to set it free, damning the Hahnemannian because he uses the high potencies, calling him a spiritualist and an exclusionist, forgetting that the Hahnemannian has hold of the other handle, endeavoring to send the inflated bubble his own way, while he damns the rationalist, and calls him a radical and

a mongrel. And while thus they tug, they shout in chorus the lines of the *good old hymn*, with but a word of alteration,

“That dose, though all hell shall endeavor to shake,  
I will never, no never, no never forsake.”

Why, gentlemen, omit the dosage question entirely ; let it not once be named among you. To my mind it is so small when compared to the great problems in medicine, the advances in surgery, the wide fields of bacteriology, the newly-discovered regions in gynecology and obstetrics, the improvements in our *materia medica*, the medico-political questions of the times and the advances in hygiene and therapeutics, that it ought not, in the state meetings, to be discussed at all. Every man after a few years' practice must decide the question as Hahnemann says—by his own experience; and so let him, and while he does so, let him allow to every other man a similar prerogative.

These are the metamorphoses which the past thirty years have brought about in the two schools of medicine, and from a careful consideration of the history of the times, I am of opinion that we must yet remain homœopaths. Until the old school of medicine allows us to exercise our own judgment in therapeutics, gives us free access to its medical societies without demanding retractions, grants us a proper position in the army and navy of our country, it still forces upon us that sectarianism which it affects to despise, and of which it is such a sad example. That some of its members, a great minority, would allow us these our proper rights I have no doubt, but that by far the greater portion would violently oppose such recognition, can easily be proven by any medical gentleman of this society, any professor in any homœopathic college, any one of you who is upon the staff of a homœopathic hospital or connected with a homœopathic journal, applying for membership to an allopathic organization of any kind. The plan was tried in New York City, and we all know the conditions of renunciation imposed.

If we relinquish homœopathy, if we shut up our hospitals, close our colleges, wipe out our journals, disband our societies, burn our books and destroy our *materia medica*, an affiliation may then be tolerated. I ask you, gentlemen of this society, can this be done ?

It is from a knowledge of these facts that the homœopathists of this state, with such preponderance of conflicting opinion against them, and with the remains of the great antagonism still hanging heavy to the skirts of the allopathic sectarians, while there still exists in certain sections of the country sufficient bigotry, intolerance and cowardice to allow an entire medical faculty of the old school to

countenance and uphold a dastardly attack of nearly two hundred students upon one single homœopath, and his forcible ejection into the street, for no other reason than his belief in homœopathy ; when the feeling runs still so strong against our school that a member of a state society rises in his place and, without remonstrance or rebuke, declares that the homœopathists are "murderers and worse than murderers," and "that every homœopath should be hung until he was dead three times." When these things still exist we cannot trust our graduates to the mercies of a single board of medical examiners, even if there be a separate examiner in therapeutics and materia medica for each school. To omit examinations on these two important factors of medical proficiency (by far the most intimately connected with the public good) would, it appears to me, nullify the object for which the board is proposed. The simplest and best method, as there are two distinct schools recognized by the legislature, is to petition for a board entirely composed of homœopathic physicians ; as we have our own hospitals, colleges and societies, let us have, at least for the present, our own examining board ; then all objections regarding fairness, political interests, etc., will be removed, and much unnecessary controversy avoided.

An independent examination is always desirable ; the college that fears it is the college that is conscious of its inherent weakness. As Dr. Roosa well says : If such requirements are necessary for the treatment of the paupers in hospitals, for the sailors and soldiers of the United States, why should they be withheld from the law-abiding citizen ? The New York Homœopathic College for years has adopted this independent method of ascertaining the qualifications of her graduates by the appointment of a Board of Censors, composed of upright and honorable men in the profession, who are in no way connected with the institution, and are given the power to reject any candidate over the heads of the faculty, if not satisfied with his medical acquirements. These examinations by a state board should be strict, but fair, not entered upon to display the knowledge of the questioner, but to draw out the learning of the student, always remembering that the very difference of position between the two (the one assured, the other uncertain) is sufficient to rattle the brains of very well qualified young men.

In the remarks, to which you have so kindly listened, I have endeavored to point out the position of homœopathy as it stands to-day, to show that the homœopaths became sectarian through the persecution of the old school, which by this very persecution established its own sectarianism ; that the violence of the opposition is in a measure sub-



siding on the one side, while momentous changes have taken place on the other, but that still renunciation of our position is as yet publicly demanded before unity can be effected, and that, therefore, until there can be a more liberal spirit manifested by our allopathic friends (enemies no more), we must continue to be a Homœopathic Society. If this is sectarianism you will readily see that it is neither dishonorable nor disgraceful. True sectarianism is compatible with the highest degree of learning ; while it is firm for the preservation of its rights, it has the greatest toleration for the opinions of others. In fact, I might say that, throughout all the world, in theology and in medicine, sectarianism is "the authorized expression of doctrine, the definite intellectual expression of belief." I hold that if sectarianism had been a bar to its progress, medicine to-day would be an incongruous mass of poorly ascertained facts; for, from the time that the sons of Hippocrates founded the dogmatists, to the period when the allopathic sect forced the homœopaths to become sectarian, the history of medicine is the history of sects, all having more or less influence upon the progress of medical science; nay, more, the majority of the illustrious leaders in medicine (not surgery) whose names have descended to our own times as acknowledged fathers in medicine were sectarians.

Draco founded the *Dogmatists*, Seraphion, of Alexandria, originated the *Empirics*, while at Laodicea, Thermison divided the doctrines of the two and developed the *Methodics*. To Aretæus, of Cappadocia, the *Pneumatists* owed their origin, while through the exertions of Archigenes the *Eclectics* rose to prominence. Galen was a terrible sectarian, and Paracelsus, who burnt his books, originated the first sect of "*Chemists*." The *Humoralists* were succeeded by the *Vitalists* and the *Solidists*. Stahl, with his anima, founded the *Spiritualists*; Hoffman was a sectarian; Van Helmont was a sectarian; Boerhaave was a sectarian; Cullen, Brown and Sydenham, all founded or modified a system of their own, and consequently were sectarian. We honor their immortal names to-day. They will exist while medicine has a history.

But since Galen's time, the man who has exerted the most profound influence in the profession, whose doctrine and whose practice have left an indelible impress on the medicine of this century, whose position as a reformer, now gradually being recognized by the medical world, will yet shine refulgent among the brightest stars in the history of medicine is Samuel Hahnemann, the discoverer and the enunciator of the law "*Similia similibus curantur*."

The area that medicine covers to-day is so immense that its contemplation alone is a matter of time and difficulty. Its tentacles extend in every direction, and draw into it, either immediately or remotely, so many abstract sciences, that the thoughtful scholar must stand amazed at the boundless realms before him. Both as a science and an art its antiquity unfolds the wisdom and learning of centuries, and its archives are ablaze with the names of the illustrious men of past and present generations. But its dignity and its beauty rest not either in the magnitude of its proportions, its antiquity or the immensity of its knowledge; above all these, and shining through the vista of the ages, shedding a benignant light over all systems, all controversies, and all schools that have existed, purifying the errors, which have been many, and illuminating the good, which has been great, is that grand catholicity of purpose which, from the time of Hippocrates to the present, has focused all its efforts upon one great object, one almost divine purpose—the relief from suffering of that being whom God created in His own image.

So long, my friends, as strong minds, minds that reason for themselves, exist in the medical, or in any other profession, there will be a difference of opinion regarding uncertain and variable points of doctrine. It has been the history of the past, it is the history of the present, and it will be the history of the future.

Unity between the schools, as they exist to-day, can never be accomplished by legislation; it can never be brought about by controversy, and still less by the abnegation of a name; but it can be developed by that high degree of knowledge, that cultivation of the mental faculties, which, in its perfection, is able to eliminate self from science and can allow each school to *freely and frankly acknowledge the good existing in the other*. Then, both possessing that unity of purpose, which has always formed an integral part of the medical profession, each will grant to the other the unrestrained right to accomplish the great end as conscience and experience may dictate; and a harmony will result, which will not only redound to the honor of the profession, but for the good of suffering humanity.







